926 Grand Ave
Rockford Ills
Jan 14 '11

My dear Mr Watson

In handing you the MS of Salix for the new ed of the Manual I wish to say a few words about what I have done — with the understanding right at the start that this letter is not to be stuck away somewhere in the herbarium as a kind of personal commentary on the whole performance — I want to write too freely for that. There is no person upon whose criticism I should so readily feel like doubting and revising my own opinions as your own — certainly no one to whom I can trust so much to correct any imperfections in literary style — In a matter of fact you would not have had me write this Salicis if you did not trust my judgment — in a matter of treatment I have by no means the experience of a constant writer like yourself — Well this is a long preludium to my few words —

The two main sections are briefly and yet fully defined — I would have

adopted Prices name America for the first if I could have found another equally good. For the second two undersons Diandria would work — there are too many diandrous species in the other group —

My first division made § 1 dominates S. longifolia — by a good long tube character — at the same time leaving out the other species with capsules globose —

The next subdivision by the number of stamens I do not like but it is the best that can be hit upon to separate our native species from the introduced fragilis — It is best to avoid sectional characters drawn from the male but in this case it is unavoidable — as I imagine it also must have appeared to the Carey

Don't be dismayed when you strike my first description S. nigra — it has given lots of bother and is as good now as I can make it — the forms are so variable and so difficult to define in a few words — The remark about Var Diandri is not wholly superfluous — it gives emphasis to the fact that the leaves bear a close enough likeness to S. cordata to deceive

even Andersson! Let me beg of you to admit the way in which I have given authors names after reduced species - following in this respect Hookers Student's Flora - Among the Willows I do not see what else I can do - There are some reduced species where it is not certainly known to whom the credit of a first reduction really belongs - Besides it saves space

S. alba var vitellina L. (Sm.)
S. alba var vitellina, Koch. — (S. vitellina L.)

I think I have the species in a nice natural - linear arrangement

nigra - amygdalina - lucida - fragilis - alba, Lawsoniana - Lawsoniana really belongs to this section - but deserves a separate group — Now about the note after S. fragilis - it is the briefest and seems to me the best way to dispose of Russelliana - ~~Fragilis~~ viridis &c - instead of alternative, separate descriptions - would you write Note before it or a bit it stand as a paragraph under the last species of the group?

Notwithstanding the fact that we have only one sex of S. Babylonica I think

it should be regarded as a duration -
I am assured that when a stream in
Pennsylvania runs for miles through
a trackless mountain forest its banks
are lined with S. Babylonicum -

Under § 2 Capsules tomentosa - Capsules
glabrous seems at a glance very artificial
- but it divides our species decently -
without doing violence to natural
sequence - brings the alpinae where
they belong &c - It would not work at all
in Europe - with us it works first rate
seems to me - Style short or none as
against style elongated - is not likely to
be misleading - The first section
following brings discolor and rostrata
together (as they should be) - and places
rostrata of all our species next the
American which is also as it should
be -

The next section (the cave repetitions) contains
the characters as far as possible of S. humilis
and S. tristis -

The next group (Argentea) gives S. argyrocarpa
where it belongs - After defining the
subgroup there seems to be little left
of S. sericea and S. petiolaris but the

differentiating characters - and this brings me to the way why I have marked these in pencil — Bill is back well - as in the present instance the Latin the whole description — You can deepen the lines if you think yes — or rub some out if you think no.

16. S. phyllicifolia, L. Have not appear in the Torrey Bulletin for February my reasons in extenso for description, the old Linnaean name for the White Alder plant — I shall also restore S. Uva ursi for good reasons which met D. Grays approval.

The cordate form owing to the number of additions is necessarily expanded beyond the old limits — You will see I have combined characters on defining groups as far as I could. S. myricoides Muhl. is such a common hybrid - has been so long in the books - has caused so much confusion and been so little understood I thought a brief description would be better than the mere mention given the newer (but not less interesting) hybrids.

It was with untic I received the pollens of the Harvard last week that of

dawned upon me when Carey got his
S. amygustata with "Catkins resembling
S. discolor in size and aspect" Her
Specimens were collected by Dr Lapham
at Milwaukee — and belong to my
S. glaucophylla which is — I am more
and more convinced — a good species —
— I thought best to add the name amygustifolia
and brevifolia, began left out reluctantly
on the score of economizing Space —

If I have made the description of
the Alpine Specimen a little fuller than
they appeared before it has only been
because so much misapprehension has
hitherto existed as to make the
discrimination of these little willows a
by word for expressing the ability of
the cultivated intellect to do
what the simple instinct could not —

Nobody — not even fairly good botanists
seemed to get the names straight

I had better stop neighbor Ives and whatever
else I may have to say — keep it another
time — I hope I can not deny that my
work will be approved — but now that it
is done I am in no mood to regard it
myself as satisfactory — Cordially Both

P.S. Section including S. lucida. one specimen
Did you use the singular as I
have written it or say Shrubs or
small bushy trees instead? Top of page 2

3. S. lucida - Dudley first observed the persistence
of the fertile arms - Bailey afterwards
went off at half-cock and described this
as a new var - not giving Dudley a word
of credit - I was glad to find deliverance
from the whole business - 4/5 of my specimens
exhibit persistent fruit

On some accounts - with my little experience - I
do not altogether like eliminating from the
description of the species - characters begun
mentioned in the group - The average botanist
will not - (the average student such as will
use the Manual I mean) - go back and combine
the synoptical group with the species
description - You have noticed this
one doubt in the quotations that are often
made from the "Synoptical Flora" without
giving more than merely the name
of the species - But this is bare space -